

everlasting controversy, give employment for their order, and introduce it to profit, power and pre-eminence. The doctrines which flowed from the lips of Jesus himself are within the comprehension of a child; but thousands of volumes have not yet explained the Platonisms engrafted on them; and for this obvious reason, that nonsense cannot be explained. Their purposes, however, are answered. Plato is canonized; and it is now deemed as impious to question his merits as those of an Apostle of Jesus. He is peculiarly appealed to as an advocate of the immortality of the soul; and yet I will venture to say, that were there no better arguments than his in proof of it, not a man in the world would believe it. It is fortunate for us, that Platonic Republicanism has not obtained the same favor as Platonic Christianity; or we should now have been all living, men, women and children, pell mell together, like beasts of the field or forest. Yet "Plato is a great philosopher," said La Fontaine. But, says Fontenelle, "Do you find his ideas very clear?" "Oh no! he is of an obscurity impenetrable." "Do you not find him full of contradictions?" "Certainly," replied La Fontaine, "he is but a sophist." Yet, immediately after, he exclaims again, "Oh, Plato was a great philosopher." Socrates had reason, indeed, to complain of the misrepresentations of Plato; for in truth, his dialogues are libels on Socrates. (To John Adams, 1814. C. VI., 354.)

PLEASURE.—Do not bite at the bait of pleasure until you know there is no hook beneath it. The art of life is the art of avoiding pain; and he is the best pilot who steers clearest of the rocks and shoals with which he is beset. Pleasure is always before us; but misfortune is at our side; while running after that, this arrests us. The most effectual means of being secure against pain is to retire within ourselves, and to suffice with our own happiness. These, which depend on ourselves, are the only pleasures a wise man will count on; for nothing is ours which another may deprive us of. (To Mrs. Maria Cosway, written in Paris, 1786. F. IV., 318.)

PLEASURES OF THE INTELLECT.—Hence, the inestimable value of intellectual pleasures. Ever in our power, always leading us to